

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE

**Notes of a meeting of the above Committee held on
Monday 17 October 2011 at 2.15 pm
In the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn**

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs E A Nockolds	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor M Back	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor G McGuiness	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor Mrs S Smeaton	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Councillor A Tyler	- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk
Mrs W Vincent	- Democratic Services Officer, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
County Councillor M Chenery of Horsbrugh	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor M Langwade	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor B Long	- Norfolk County Council
County Councillor A J Wright	- Norfolk County Council
Dr R Hanley	- Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

1 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Mrs E Nockolds be appointed as Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That County Councillor A J Wright be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor R Rockcliffe and V Trevelyan.

4 MINUTES

The notes of the information discussion held on 13 June 2011 were confirmed as a correct record.

5 MATTERS ARISING

There were none.

6 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

7 REPORT OF WESTERN AREA MANAGER

King's Lynn Museums Report – March to May 2011

The Western Area Manager presented his report which provided Members with information on King's Lynn Museums for the period June to September 2011 as set out below:

(i) Exhibitions and events at Lynn Museum

The Lynn Museum was now in the free admission period which runs from October 2011 to March 2012. A banner offering free admission was displayed at the front of the Lynn Museum.

The temporary exhibition *Memories of Lynn: King's Lynn since the 60s*, was on display at Lynn Museum until 18 June. This exhibition featured Lynn people sharing their experience of changes to the town since the 1960s. It also served as the focus for a number of events and activities including a film-making project with a group of young people categorised as NEET (not in education, employment or training).

The current temporary exhibition at Lynn Museum was *Fenland Stories*, on show from 2 July until 10 January. This was the travelling exhibition developed by the Greater Fens Museums Partnership, which had been touring Fenland venues during the last year. The exhibition explored traditional Fenland tales and included a collection of animated films produced by local people retelling these stories or giving them a modern twist. The films were shown on the centrepiece of the exhibition, the "Whispering Willow" tree. A programme of related events was supporting this exhibition, which had also been enhanced with displays of Fenland objects from the King's Lynn Museums collections.

From 2 July to 27 August, Lynn Museum also hosted an exhibition of embroidery work by local craftspeople, supported by a range of demonstrations.

A pair of colour chalk drawings from 1957 showing the proposed Campbell's soup factory were currently on display in the Lynn Museum as part of a display of "painting pairs". The drawings had attracted media interest linked to the planned demolition of the Campbell's plant and tower.

A programme of events for children was organised at Lynn Museum for the school Summer holidays including *Fenland Stories* on 26 July and *Mask Making* on 2 August. There was also a range of background activities available in the galleries. Some 350 participants engaged with these activities.

A programme of occasional illustrated talks was taking place at Lynn Museum on Wednesday afternoons. Recent talks had included *Fine Art in Museum Displays* and *Zeppelin Raids over Norfolk and Suffolk*. The latter talk by Collections Officer Tim Thorpe attracted considerable interest in the local media, with an article published in the *Lynn News*. This talk was enhanced by a display of objects and ephemera relating to the Zeppelin Raid of 1917. A talk was held on *18th Century Literature* on 12 October.

To mark national Archaeology Day, part of the Festival of British Archaeology, Lynn Museum hosted a day of archaeology activities on 30 July. The programme was supported by NCC colleagues from the Historic Environment Division including the Norfolk Finds Liaison Officer, alongside representatives from King's Lynn metal detecting club and the West Norfolk and King's Lynn Archaeological Society. Members of the excavation team from the SHARP project were also on hand to discuss the latest news from the dig at Sedgeford. In addition to a range of hands-on activities and a finds identification service, there were also tours of the Seahenge gallery and a chance for visitors to make honeysuckle rope. The event was attended by around 90 visitors.

The Lynn Museum participated in the Civic Society's Heritage Open Day programme on Sunday 11 September, offering free admission. The period music group *Minstrels Gallery* entertained the 534 visitors with performances of Tudor music and a display of instruments.

(ii) Other Museum Developments

NMAS staff were currently moving into the new offices provided by the Borough Council on the first floor of the former Town House Museum building above the Registrars offices. The offices included an activity room that would be used as the main venue for youth/NEET engagement projects in King's Lynn. A small display of objects and paintings would occupy the area of the Museums Service within the Town Hall.

In early summer, NMAS supported colleagues from the Borough Council with the development and submission of the Round 1 funding bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for the re-development of the Town Hall complex. As part of this work, NMAS assisted with the co-ordination of an evaluation project, which included the development of a travelling consultation display that toured King's Court, the Lynn Museum, King's Lynn Library and the Town Hall. It was also noted that paintings would be mounted in the area of the Town Hall which was now occupied by the Registrars.

NMAS continued to provide curatorial advice, support and an enquiry service for those Borough collections currently held in the Town Hall including fine art and Civic Regalia. This role formed part of the Service Level Agreement for 2011-12. Reference was made to the recent visit

by the Collections Officer, whereby a programme of works would be put in place to address any remedial actions required to be taken.

A planning application was in train relating to the proposed modest alterations to the front glazed elevation of the Lynn Museum, following liaison with the Borough Council. As well as creating more space within the reception area for use by schools and other groups, these works would remove the sheltered external area that had been a focus for antisocial behaviour. The antisocial behaviour dispersal order currently for the museum and bus station expired in October and would not be renewed. All incidents would be recorded by the staff at the Museum and forwarded to the Police.

(iii) Friends of King's Lynn Museums

The Friends were continuing to offer a varied programme for its 100 members including lunchtime talks, trips and an annual lecture.

The Friends continued to support a long-term conservation programme for parts of the fine art collections.

The Friends AGM took place at Lynn Museum on Monday 10 October.

(iii) Partnership Projects

King's Lynn Museums continued to lead the Greater Fens Museums Partnership. A Stage 2 Heritage Grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund had been submitted for the successor Fenland Partnership project *Fenland Lives and Land*. The Committee was informed that the stage 2 application had been successful and approximately £360,000 had been awarded to undertake a project over a period of 3 years. Five exhibitions had been identified, together with a linked programme of events. A press release would be issued announcing the funding once the embargo had been lifted by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The current travelling exhibition and events project organised by the Fenland Partnership was *Fenland Stories*, exploring both traditional and modern Fenland tales. This exhibition was currently on display at Lynn Museum.

NMAS was working in partnership with the Arts Centre Trust on plans for a joint exhibition running from January to March 2012.

The Sedgeford cow bone and coin hoard had been returned to display at Lynn Museum following a loan to the *Treasures Under Your Feet* exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge.

(iv) Learning & Outreach

A monthly *Mini Explorers Club* continued to meet at the Lynn Museum, targeted at under 5's, their carers and families.

The Learning Officer continued to deliver a varied programme of events for local schools.

The Community Outreach Officer continued to deliver programmes for young people categorised as NEET. Following the departure of the previous post holder Marie Kennedy to a new job, this role had been taken up by Stuart Hall. The Youth Forum was involved in a new project hosted at Gressinghall Museum.

Members of the King's Lynn Museums Youth Forum created the consultation film *Museum Busters*, which was submitted as part of the evaluation evidence for the Round 1 HLF bid for the Town Hall project.

A development programme was currently underway for the Museum Learning Assistant team at Lynn Museum. Members of this team would have an important role in supporting a range of formal and informal learning activities at the museum.

(v) Visitor numbers

The Western Area Manager reported the visitor numbers for the Lynn Museum as set out below:

<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
September 1,521	September 1,570
<u>Year to date</u>	<u>2010</u>
5,964	5,550

The Committee was advised that it was anticipated that visits to the Lynn Museum for 2011 would exceed 15,000.

In response to questions from County Councillor Long on the expiration of the anti social behaviour dispersal order in October, the Western Area Manager explained that staff at the Museum would be instructed to report incidents to the Police. The Western Area Manager undertook to forward any relevant information to County Councillor Long of any incidents which occurred. The situation would be monitored closely. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds suggested that the item be placed on future agendas of the SNAP meetings. County Councillor Long undertook to ensure that the item was placed on future agendas of the SNAP meetings.

Following a question from Councillor Smeaton on the Fenland Partnership and Fenland Stories, the Western Area Manager explained that 5 exhibitions had been identified and continued to be developed. He agreed to circulate a summary of the projects/exhibitions to all Members of the Committee.

Councillor Chenery referred to 1.8 of the report and asked for an update on the dig at Sedgford. In response, the Western Area Manager advised that

he did not have the information available today but would forward an update report to Councillor Chenery direct.

Councillor Back commented that he had attended the Mask Making event with his daughter and that it was an excellent workshop.

Councillor Back referred to section 2.2 of the report and enquired if there were any plans in place to consult further with the Civic Society if the Council was successful in obtaining stage 1 of the funding bid to HLF. In response, the Western Area Manager advised that the Town Hall was a Borough Council project, but his understanding was that there was a firm commitment to establishing a Consultative Forum inviting representatives from key stakeholder groups, including the Civic Society.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds advised that at a meeting of the Borough Council's Cabinet Scrutiny Committee she had given an undertaking that the Civic Society would be invited to be represented on the Consultative Forum for stage 2 of the HLF bid.

Councillor Back referred to 1.7 of the report and asked if it had been considered to hold talks in the early evening to enable those people who were in daytime employment to attend. The Western Area Manager explained that evening talks had taken place previously, but a disappointing response had been received. There would also be costs involved as staff would need to be employed during the evening. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds informed Members that a talk had been given by the County Archivist previously at the Town Hall and the Friends of the Museum hosted talks at Thoresby College and the Town Hall.

Following a question from County Councillor Langwade on the files and items on shelving located at the back of the Town Hall, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds provided assurance that the documents and files would be carefully sifted and cleared once the outcome of the stage 1 bid was announced.

Councillor Tyler suggested that a talk be trialled during the day on a Saturday.

In response to questions from Councillor Tyler on the working in partnership with the Arts Centre on plans for a joint exhibition, the Western Area Manager explained that his understanding was that the Museums Service had funded the exhibition at the Lynn Museum, but that the Renaissance in the Regions Programme would support the exhibition at a modest cost of approximately £2,000. The Western Area Manager would provide further details at the next meeting of the Committee.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds informed the Committee that there was a good working relationship with local metal detecting clubs and the King's Lynn Archaeology Society. Many of their finds were often not of great value.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds thanked the Western Area Manager for an interesting report.

RESOLVED: (1) That the report be noted.

(2) County Councillor Long to place a standing item on SNAP agendas relating to the monitoring of anti-social behaviour within the Bus Station Area/Lynn Museum.

(3) The Western Area Manager would circulate a summary of projects/exhibitions relating to the Fenland Partnership to the Committee.

(4) The Western Area Manager to forward an update report on the Sedgeford dig direct to County Councillor Chenery.

(5) The Western Area Manager to provide further details of the partnership work between the NMAS and the Arts Centre Trust at the next meeting.

8 SITE UPDATE REPORTS

(a) Green Quay Six Monthly Activity Report

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds apologised for the lateness of the report, but explained that it was important for the Committee to be kept informed of activities at the Green Quay.

In the absence of Mr M Dennis, Green Quay Manager, the Committee received a written activity report, a summary of the key points is set out below:

- (i) Sales for the past 6 months for cafe and shop were up slightly on the same period last year as well as room hire. However, footfall had dropped but this had seen an increase in spend per head.
- (ii) The social evenings organised for the summer months had been well supported by members and similar events would run through the winter months. A new series of the popular "Supper Talks" would commence on 18 October and run through to March.
- (iii) More organisations were using the conference room bringing in much needed revenue.
- (iv) Being open on a Sunday visitors were very surprised and disappointed that the rest of the attractions in the Discover King's Lynn leaflet were closed, including the TIC until noon.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained that the King's Lynn Museum had previously been open on a Sunday, but there had been low attendance rates.

County Councillor Long expressed concern regarding the lateness of the report and some of the comments made by the Green Quay Manager and suggested that he be requested to attend future meetings, alternatively perhaps the Chairman of the Green Quay be invited to attend. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that Mr Dennis had attended previous

meetings of the Committee and that she had spoken to him prior to this meeting and advised that it was not necessary for him to attend today.

RESOLVED: (1) That the report be noted.

(2) The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds to contact the Green Quay Manager to discuss attendance at future meetings.

(b) True's Yard Activity Report

The Committee received a written report from the Manager of True's Yard which provided an update on the following:

- (i) Norfolk Eastern Daily Press Tourism Awards – True's Yard was entered in the best visitor attraction category in August and were now through to the second stage of the award process.
- (ii) Visitor Numbers and Comparisons for the Quarter – overall income and total visitors were up on last year, which was a record year. 15 schools were now members of the Time Club which had led to even more school visitors and outreach sessions and assemblies.
- (iii) HLF Project – The HLF project would close in its entirety in June 2012. Special activities and workshops were ongoing, and there was a continual process of training staff and volunteers.
- (iv) Staff and Volunteers – A curatorial project worker spent 4 months at True's Yard with a brief to re-display the Old Smithy. The new improved smithy was launched on 30 September by the Borough Mayor. The project was funded by the Friends of True's Yard. More volunteer North End tour guides were being trained through the summer to join the existing group of 10.
- (v) Autumn Talks Programme – Programme had been a success with all 8 talks being full.
- (vi) SHARE Museums East Grant – True's Yard had received a grant from SHARE East for collections care of the extensive Eastern Sea Fisheries collection.
- (vii) The Maritime Trail and Maritime Month – Along with the Green Quay, Town Guides and Eastern IFCA an exhibition of a programme of talks was staged. This was well received and it was hoped could be continued next year.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that visitor numbers for September was lower compared to 2010. She explained that there were more attractions open on Heritage Day and some visitors may have chosen to visit different attractions than in 2010. Councillor McGuinness added that the decrease in visitor numbers could be because of the schools returning a week earlier in September than in 2010.

The Western Area Manager explained that the SHARE East training programme was managed by NMAS. He added that True's Yard also benefitted from support from the Museums Development Officer. The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that this was a good example of partnership working.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

9 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS 2012

Monday 9 January 2012 at 2.15 pm in Meeting Rooms 1, 2 and 3, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn

Monday 19 March 2012 at 2.15 pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

Monday 11 June 2012 at 2.15 pm in Meeting Rooms 1, 2 and 3, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn

Monday 12 November at 2.15 pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn

The Meeting closed at 3.13 pm